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Project Summaries

ROD R. BLAGOJEVICH
GOVERNOR



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2003
*Governor's
Home Town
Awards*

Project Summaries

Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity*

*dba Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs

Rod R Blagojevich ▪ Governor
Jack Lavin ▪ Director

2003 Governor's Home Town Awards

Category I

(Communities with a population of 0-3,000)

Altamont

Altamont Youth Sports Commission – Baseball, Softball Workout Complex

Altamont has played host to numerous Amateur Softball Association tournaments for several years. Baseball and softball are two of the community's favorite sports. In an effort to promote fun and safe activities for its children, the community came together to develop and build an indoor baseball/softball training facility. Local businesses donated materials and money. Children in the leagues raised money via candy sales and helped build the facility.

Contact: Brian Lange
5782 East 950th Avenue
Altamont, Illinois 62411
618/483-5344

Catlin

Catlin Recreation Complex – All Weather Track

Catlin Recreation Complex, nominated for the 2003 Governor's Cup Award, united the community as grandparents, parents and children, students and teachers, businessmen and politicians worked side-by-side for a common cause. The one hundred sixty plus volunteers donated their time, money and resources to improve their community. As a result of this local 'miracle', the Catlin Recreation Complex all weather track will host several events for various organizations including the Danville Area Community College and the East Central Illinois Special Olympics.

Judges' Comments: "Unparalleled cooperation among businesses, village government, school board and community volunteers."

Contact: Chad Hays
604 Webster
P.O. Box 704
Catlin, Illinois 61817
217/442-6598
chadhays@provenahealth.com

Divernon

Divernon Community Activities Committee

A local citizen of Divernon recognized a need to provide constructive activities for children out of school for the summer, and approached the village with the idea of using a village-owned facility to hold such activities. From this idea sprung a teen dance, "Family Day" event and a Holiday Decorating Contest. With a dedicated staff of sixty-seven volunteers and a number of donations from businesses, the village, and citizens, these events were a success.

Contact: Gretchen Henson
203 East Springer Street
Divernon, Illinois 62530
217/658-3540

Jerome

Village of Jerome Neighborhood Watch Association – Kids Care Day

The Village of Jerome Police department developed Kids Care day in response to witnessing an increase in criminal activity, often involving children, occurring in their neighboring communities. With the help of several businesses, local police and sheriff departments, several state emergency departments and other members of the community, the Jerome Police department organized a day for parents and chil-

dren to learn what to do in various emergency situations.

Judges' Comments: "Child safety is always needed, and these people put the resources together."

Contact: Steve J. Roth
2901 Leonard Street
Springfield, Illinois 62704
217/546-2203

Lena

Field of Honor Veterans Memorial

Filled with patriotic spirit, three members of American Legion Lena Post 577 set the wheels in motion to create a lasting memorial for members of the community who served in various wars starting with WWI. The Field of Honor Veterans Memorial honors 1,240 veterans from 5 different towns (Lena, Winslow, McConnell, Eleroy and Waddams Grove). The Memorial Dedication occurred on May 11, 2003.

Contact: Robert Bussian
625 South Maple
Lena, Illinois 61048
815/369-4245

Richview

Richview

The Richview community came together to remodel and repair a deteriorating old school building into a thriving Community Center. This resulted in the development of a Community Club that organizes events for Easter and Christmas, maintains the park and manages the Community Center. Despite a total population of 320 people, an average of 40 individuals often volunteer in some capacity.

Contact: Ken Sodko, Mayor
P.O. Box 88
Richview, Illinois 62877
618/249-8123

Trenton

Trenton Emergency Management Service

Learning of the dire need for an updated Emergency Operations Plan, members of Trenton's community met to address that and in the process organized an Emergency Management Service made up of volunteers. These individuals are versed in storm spotting, handling of hazardous materials, basic first aid and operating a 911 system should the city lose contact with the regular 911 operator in Carlyle. Realizing the need to be prepared, these 36 volunteers answered the call at little to no cost to the city.

Contact: Michael A. Jones, Police Chief
25 West Indiana
Trenton, Illinois 62293
618/224-9226

Waddams Township

McConnell Area Historical Museum

Waddams Township and the McConnell Area Historical Society are extremely proud of their efforts to create the McConnell Area Historical Museum. Thanks to various donations of time, labor, resources and items to display, the museum opened in August 2002. The museum, still in its infancy, manages to bring the community together while simultaneously serving as a tourism attraction to the surrounding communities.

Contact: Terry Price
514 West Fairway Drive
Lena, Illinois 61048
815/369-2017
www.mcconnell-area-historical-society.mus.il.us

2003 Governor's Home Town Awards

Category II

(Communities with a population of 3,001-7,000)

Bartonville

Summer of Safety

Ten years ago, Bartonville police and fire departments joined forces to produce an educational safety program for children in the area. The program was held in May prior to the end of the school year. Over the years, the number of volunteers who organize and produce the event has increased. Other emergency agencies (911, Red Cross, EMS) now participate, presenting vital information through interactive activities. Many businesses also take part in the events through donations of food, gifts and money. The project's costs are minimal, yet the results are immeasurable: 80% reduction of accidents and injuries to children in the community.

Contact: Kathy Ashby
12 Gulf Stream
Bartonville, Illinois 61607
309/697-2323

or

Brian Fengel, Chief
Bartonville Police Department
5918 South Adams Street
Bartonville, Illinois 61607
309/697-2323

Fairfield

The Clothes Line, Inc.

The Clothes Line, Inc. grew out of one person's dream to collect good used clothing and make it available to the needy in her community. From that dream and the aid of 250 volunteers, a non-for-profit retail store opened. Individuals may receive free clothing upon a referral from a firefighter, teacher, minister, case-

worker or the director of The Clothes Line, Inc. Money received is given to various local charitable organizations.

Contact: Becky Stahl or Shirley Clark
122 Main Street
Fairfield, Illinois 62837

Greenville

Trompe L'oeil Art Murals

To help beautify the community, the Greenville Women's Club and Greenville Business and Professional Association finance various artistic projects. The projects, dimensional murals painted on businesses' walls, bring to life the past and the present. These murals have helped increase tourism in this town of retail and antique stores.

Contact: Sandra Loyd
214 North Third
Greenville, Illinois 62246
618/664-2255

Marshall

Marshall Main Street Program

545 volunteers united to revive the Chautauqua experience. Chautauqua brings history alive for small towns at a minimal cost via entertainment. Marshall witnessed an increase in business as a result of this event.

Contact: Marshall Main Street Program
708 Archer Avenue
Marshall, Illinois 62441
217/826-9023

Mount Morris

Dillehay Park

Upon the completion of a playground inspection, Mount Morris realized they needed to improve the safety of the sports and exercise facilities and expand the options of recreational activities available at Dillehay Park. After receiving a grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and raising additional funds for the project, a committee of 100 plus volunteers joined together to modernize and redesign Dillehay Park. The park now offers a variety of activities for individuals ranging from toddlers to adults.

Judges' Comments: "Twenty acres has been turned into a place for enjoyment for the citizens of Mt. Morris from daycare and preschool age to the handicapped and elderly...The community all comes together when something needs to be accomplished. From the start, they had the support from over 100 citizens, manufacturer representatives and a landscape architect all of whom donated their time."

Contact: Jon Murray
105 West Lincoln Street
Mount Morris, Illinois 61054
815/734-6116

Oglesby

Oglesby, Our Home Town

Oglesby, Our Home Town, was nominated for the 2003 Governor's Cup Award. The citizens of Oglesby decided to celebrate their city's centennial birthday in a unique way—write a book about the history of Oglesby. This wonderful memoir would not have existed without the authors of this book—the Oglesby community. This project resulted in a rich historical look at, and a strong appreciation for, Oglesby.

Judges' Comments: "This project brought together all ages of the population to join in a combined effort to bring forth a book of facts for their centennial and will be useful for many generations to come."

Contact: Ken Ficek
328 Alice Avenue
Oglesby, Illinois 61348
815/883-8482

Vandalia

Vandalia's Little Community Garden

The CEFS office in Vandalia noticed that the number of families participating in its food program was growing in size each year. With the help of the University of Illinois Extension Office, the city of Vandalia and 75 volunteers, a community garden was created. The food grown in this garden, 1,600 pounds, went to the local food pantry and to senior citizen complexes.

Contact: Mrs. Sid File
204 North 4th Street
Vandalia, Illinois 62471
618/283-3434

Willow Springs

Historical Society Museum and Research Center

Eleven dedicated volunteers spent several years restoring Willow Springs' history and preserving historical artifacts they collected during that time. Until now, the Willow Springs Historical Society did not have a permanent location to showcase the community's history. Recently the Willow Springs Police Department and Village Hall relocated and donated their old building complex to these dedicated individuals who have now started to organize their new home.

Contact: Jean Thode
7233 Arbor Lane
Justice, Illinois 60458
708/458-9672

or

Sue Fredrickson
One Village Circle
Willow Springs, Illinois 60480
708/467-3700

2003 Governor's Home Town Awards

Category III

(Communities with a population of 7,001-15,000)

LaGrange Park

Party in the Park

An event that started as a one day celebration for the village's centennial birthday has now become a three day annual festival. Several thousands of people attend this fun-filled event. In 2002, 162 individuals volunteered their time to make it a success. Some money raised from Party in the Park goes to assist the Police and Fire departments purchase necessary safety equipment.

Contact: Becky Srejma
Steve Jones
447 North Catherine Avenue
La Grange Park, Illinois 60526
708/354-0225

LaSalle

LaSalle Historic District Signage

In an effort to stimulate tourism in LaSalle and thus serve as a catalyst for economic development for the city, leaders in LaSalle decided to develop the downtown area as a designated historical district. Upon receiving a Member Initiative Funds grant for \$100,000, the city decided to use the money to create plaques to designate several historic sites. 180 plus volunteers, comprised of businessmen, politicians and students, participated in the project via research and development of the plaques.

Contact: Dr. Barbara Burton
Pamela Schallhorn
737 Ninth Street
LaSalle, Illinois 61301
815/223-7500

Paris

Holiday in the Park

Holiday in the Park was created from an idea three Paris citizens shared on how to increase tourism to the city. This festive display of holiday lights is the result of the collective efforts of 3,000 volunteers and draws individuals from neighboring states. Last year alone, almost 12,000 people drove through the park. The costs associated with the event are minimal and go to cover such items as light bulbs, candy canes, hot chocolate and electricity.

Contact: Judy Cash
148 Steidl Road
Paris, Illinois 61944
217/463-9780

Pontiac

AdventureCARE

AdventureCare, nominated for the 2003 Governor's Cup award, serves the children in Livingston County. Individuals within the community saw a need for a licensed day care center, something the community lacked. As a result, new businesses were not moving into Pontiac. AdventureCare, a child care and Children's Health Center, developed as a result of a collaborative effort of several organizations in the county to integrate new and existing children's health programs, educational childcare for special and non-special needs children and assistive technology for both children and adults under one organizational structure. 221 volunteers converged to meet the challenge before them and through donations of their time and money, AdventureCare was created.

Judges' Comments: "Top professionals involved. Only child care of its kind in Illinois"

Contact: Kenneth Beutke, Asst. Adm.
OSF Saint James – John W. A
Albrecht Medical Center
2500 West Reynolds Street
Pontiac, Illinois 61764
815/842-4922

Pulaski County

Villa Ridge Park

A group of 19 dedicated volunteers united to beautify Villa Ridge Park. The park had been left unattended, becoming dangerous as well as an eyesore. Once the community came into ownership of the property, these 19 volunteers rallied the community to dedicate time and money to improve the park. Villa Ridge park now offers its citizens a location to meet with friends and enjoy the outdoors.

Contact: Jerry P. Thurston
500 Illinois Avenue
Mound City, Illinois 62963
618/342-6866

Shorewood

Shorewood Soccer League

Started by 18 visionary parents interested in creating a healthy activity that emphasized teamwork, sportsmanship and camaraderie for children, the Shorewood Soccer League grew into an organization of over 900 participants. A dedicated team of 13 volunteers who sit on a board supervise and oversee a volunteer corps of 344 who run and operate the program via donations of time (operating concession stands, coaching, serving as line judges, etc.), money and resources. This program would never have succeeded without these volunteers' commitment to the local children.

Contact: Jack Petty
1021 Country Drive
Shorewood, Illinois 60431
815/352-6133

Streator

Y-Alive

In an effort to deter youth violence, Pastor Jamie Swanson started the Y-Alive program. The program, which runs every other Saturday at the local YMCA, is staffed by 240 volunteers a year. Y-Alive is geared towards youth in 6th through 9th grade. It allows the youth to hang out with friends while in a controlled, safe environment. The program has grown so much in popularity that youth often line up outside the doors early to be sure to get in.

Judges' Comments: "Valuable deterrent to youth crimes. Volunteer effort is good. Dedication of key people is excellent."

Contact: Patti Jonland
1802 Golfview Drive, #1
Streator, Illinois 61364
815/672-6422

Taylorville

Meals on Wheels Program

125 volunteers participate in bringing meals to the homebound, disabled and seniors of this community. The volunteers are made up of individuals from diverse backgrounds. This program allows volunteers and the homebound, disabled and seniors to meet and interact with each other. In some cases this is the only human contact the recipients of the meals have on a daily basis.

Contact: Alice Benton
701 West Adams Street
Taylorville, Illinois 62568
217/824-4263

2003 Governor's Home Town Awards

Category IV

(Communities with a population of 15,001-18,000)

Bridgeview

9-11 Remembrance

As the first anniversary of September 11th approached, Mayor Steven Landek, Claudette Struzik and 100 to 125 volunteers wanted to do something to help their friends and neighbors remember and cope with this particular day. So under the cover of night, the volunteers went out and placed an American flag at strategic locations in front of every house. That morning residents of Bridgeview were filled with pride as they saw the rows of flags around their neighborhoods.

Judges' Comments: "Emotional, pertinent, exciting. Reached a variety of age groups. Filled an important need at a special time."

"A patriotic, emotional program. Secrecy and timing was of the most importance. Can you imagine 100 - 125 volunteers secretly putting out flags in the dark of night? Awesome idea."

Contact: Claudette Struzik
7500 South Oketo
Bridgeview, Illinois 60455
708/924-8021

Country Club Hills

City Beautification Program

Wanting to beautify the city, 283 volunteers built "Welcome Planters" of similar design and materials. These planters, located throughout the city, hold flowers that are planted each year. An explosion of color greets individuals as they drive through Country Club Hills.

Contact: Ed Meinheit
4200 West 183rd Street
Country Club Hills, Illinois 60478
708/798-2616

Country Club Hills

Emergency Service & Disaster Agency

Shortly after September 11, 2001, the Country Club Hills Police Department witnessed an increase in volunteers for their Emergency Service and Disaster Agency (ESDA). The number of volunteers increased fourfold to a total of 40 members. ESDA, a program nominated for the 2003 Governor's Cup award, serves as the extra 'eyes and ears' of the community, having been trained in the newest security measures.

Judges' Comments: "Gives resident volunteers a feeling of strength in ownership of the community's security."

"Captures essence of what a volunteer program should be. Resident volunteers are proud of assumed ownership in this program."

Contact: William A. Brown, Chief
3700 West 175th Place
Country Club Hills, Illinois 60478

Palos Hills

Concerts in the Park

The project developed in response to a need for free, cultural entertainment for the city's residents and for members of surrounding communities. Learning that a strong cultural presence enhances community life, the Concerts in the Park Program was enacted. Five musical concerts were held throughout the summer and 50 volunteers (10 per concert) worked the events. The concerts proved to be an excellent way to bring residents—young and old—together.

Contact: Mary Orlowicz
8455 West 103rd Street
Palos Hills, Illinois 60465
708/430-4500

Palos Hills

Santa Stockings

Sixty members of the Palos Hills' 39'ers Senior group decided to make and deliver "Santa Stockings" to seniors at Palos Hills Extended Care. The volunteers compiled various items and money from local businesses and stuffed the items into the stockings they had individually created for the seniors. The 39'ers Senior group went to the Extended Care center to deliver the stockings to each of the center's residents. The residents were excited and surprised when they were each handed a stocking, and the 39'ers felt wonderful having brought happiness into their neighbors' lives.

Contact: Teri Szablewski
8455 West 103rd Street
Palos Hills, Illinois 60465
708/430-4500

Palos Hills

Town Square Park

In desperate need of a new community center, the residents of Palos Hills came together to raise money to build this new center. The money raised was used to develop a new center that houses a Veterans' Memorial, a waterfall feature, walking trail, gazebo and children's play area. With Town Square Park complete, many individuals have taken advantage of this new venue—hosting a variety of events. Town Square Park is constantly used throughout the year.

Contact: Mary Jo Vincent
8455 West 103rd Street
Palos Hills, Illinois 60465
708/430-4500

Palos Hills

Youth Turnabout Day

Youth Turnabout Day provides 50 junior high and high school students a fun and educational opportunity to serve in a business or political capacity for a day to learn daily responsibilities

of a chosen profession. Several members of the community joined their efforts to make this program a success. In the end, this program created a bond between students, government, educators and businesses. Students walk away from the experience having a better understanding of the profession they are considering as a career.

Contact: Cindy DeNormandie
Director of Recreation
Community Activity Center
8455 West 103rd Street
Palos Hills, Illinois 60465
708/430-4500

Riverdale

Save Our Streets/Stay in School

Mayor Evans' commitment to developing programs and opportunities that positively acknowledge youth stimulated the creation of a Ministerial Council comprised of local pastors, school district representatives and members of the Community Policing Initiative. The Ministerial Council, with Pastor James Meeks' aid, held a youth rally, "Save Our Streets", to encourage youth to stay in school and avoid drugs and other negative behavior. This rally was a springboard for the "Most Perfect Attendance Program." School attendance became a competition with classrooms competing against other classrooms in its own school and others. The classroom with the highest, most perfect attendance was then recognized by the community on Martin Luther King Day. Each student received a jacket with the logo "I'm no fool, I'm going to school."

Judges' Comments: "A good example of church, school and state working together to address a need concerning the youth of the community."

Contact: Mayor Zenovia Evans
Village of Riverdale
157 West 144th Street
Riverdale, Illinois 60827
708/841-2200

2003 Governor's Home Town Awards

Category V

(Communities with a population of 18,001-24,000)

Bellwood

Arts, Athletics and Education Project
Bellwood Police Department saw a 20% increase in juvenile crime and delinquency, usually in the evening hours. Wanting to alter this trend, Bellwood instituted a variety of evening programs targeting at-risk youth ages 7 through 18. A total of 35 volunteers from the community participated in designing and operating athletic, educational and employment oriented programs. Throughout the summer, program participants took field trips, heard from guest speakers and showcased their projects. The Bellwood Police noticed an 8% decline in juvenile delinquency and crime.

Contact: Gregory Moore, Chief of Police
3200 Washington Boulevard
Bellwood, Illinois 60104
708/547-3530

East Peoria

Youth Council Christmas Food Basket Program

The Youth Council Christmas Food Basket Program asks the community for help in creating baskets for low-income families experiencing hardships and residents receiving Social Security benefits. The food baskets contain gift certificates for food and winter clothing for children. Fifty volunteers, with the help of the community, provided 285 neighbors and friends with baskets.

Contact: Nancy Grigsby
City of East Peoria
100 South Main Street
East Peoria, Illinois 61611
309/698-4715

Franklin Park

B-12 Tower Historic Site

Faced with ownership of an empty lot that was nothing more than an eyesore to the Village, Franklin Park residents, businesses and the Village Board decided to do something about it. Metra donated the B-12 Tower and a caboose to Franklin Park, which the residents used to start making the empty lot into a historic site. The B-12 Tower was turned into a museum and the empty lot was landscaped. Picnic tables and benches were added to provide visitors to the park a place to sit, relax and enjoy the view. This beautiful park would not have existed without the help of the 200 community members.

Contact: Joan Morys/Dan Pritchett
9500 West Belmont Avenue
Franklin Park, Illinois 60131
847/671-8235

Libertyville

Lightning Warning System

The unpredictable weather in the Midwest has caused an increase in the number of injuries and deaths of coaches and children in parks and on athletic fields as a result of being hit by lightning. Libertyville, which owns and maintains over 570 acres of park lands, realized that it needed to do something to protect its citizens from the risk of being hit by lightning. So the village, with the help of 60 volunteers, raised the necessary funds required to install an early warning lightning detection system in six key locations. The alarm sounds when weather conditions could lead to a cloud-to-ground lightning strike. Libertyville believes

that an estimated 550,000 individuals who use the parks directly benefit from this effort.

Contact: Kevin Bowens
118 West Cook Avenue
Libertyville, Illinois 60048
847/362-2430

Lisle

Birdhouses of Lisle Project

This public art project pulled in 441 volunteers to decorate birdhouses while creating pieces of living art, beautifying the downtown area and raising money for a local not-for-profit organization. The Birdhouses of Lisle project served as a tourist attraction for neighboring areas, instilling pride in the community. Other communities began approaching volunteers to learn how they might emulate the birdhouse project. As peoples' pride in Lisle grew, so did the interest in participating in other public art projects. As a result, the community has started to work on its next project.

Contact: Diane Tuscher-Ancede
4745 Main Street
Lisle, Illinois 60532
630/435-9751

Mattoon

Mattoon Area Public Action to Deliver Shelter (PADS)

The Mattoon Area Public Action to Deliver Shelter (PADS), nominated for the 2003 Governor's Cup award, was the result of one man's commitment to shelter the homeless. After assessing the need for a shelter, Mr. Robert Beall went to work in contacting local churches, organizations serving the homeless, businesses and the community for assistance in raising the necessary funds required to purchase a site to serve as the shelter. The community at large was very willing to help in this effort, raising over \$40,000 and volunteering their time to fix up the new homeless shelter. As a result of 136 volunteers' dedication, the homeless shelter is now up and running, serving anyone who

needs shelter and a good meal.

Judges noted volunteers' dedication, especially in taking shifts at night.

Contact: Bob Beall
1408 Wabash Avenue
Mattoon, Illinois 61938
217/234-PADS (7237)

Ottawa

Lincoln-Douglas Debate Memorial Plaza

Ottawa, home of the Lincoln-Douglas Debate where Lincoln introduced the slavery issue to the nation, has served as a tourist location for Lincoln history buffs for years. The city decided to create a proper memorial to Lincoln with grand bronze statutes of him and Douglas. To do this, the city held numerous fundraisers and received a grant from the state. Once Ottawa obtained the required funds, 325 dedicated volunteers set to work on physically creating the beautiful memorial plaza that now stands in Washington Square as a testament to a major moment in the civil rights movement.

Contact: Mayor Richard Eschbach
301 West Madison Street
Ottawa, Illinois 61350
815/433-0161

Union County

Pets Are Worth Saving, Inc. (PAWS)

In an attempt to deal with the increase in the animal population in the area, Pets Are Worth Saving, Inc. was created. This not-for-profit organization, through the help of 35 volunteers, seeks homes for unwanted pets via rescue and adoption programs and educates the public about humane attitudes and practices towards animals. The volunteers hope to prevent the destruction of valuable, adoptable animals while at the same time controlling increases in the animal population.

Contact: Carol Hoffman
650 Mt. Zion Road
Dongola, Illinois 62926
618/833-9928

2003 Governor's Home Town Awards

Category VI

(Communities with a population of 24,001-48,000)

Alton

Girl Scout Window Design

In an effort to teach young girls the benefits of volunteering while simultaneously beautifying the downtown area of Alton, the Alton Marketplace asked 10 local Girl Scout troops to decorate 22 businesses' windows. The girls gladly did so, competing with one another for the best design. In the end, the experience proved fruitful as the businesses and the girls established relationships and the girls learned how volunteering can better one's community.

Contact: Jerika Bateman
Alton Marketplace
100 East Broadway
Alton, Illinois 62002
618/463-1016

Elk Grove Village

Character Counts Foot Rally

Character Counts Foot Rally attempts to teach children the six pillars of character—trustworthiness, fairness, respect, caring, responsibility and citizenship—through a fun, educational activity. 25 volunteers (policemen, firefighters, businesses and mothers) united to show children that the community is there to aid them in making correct moral decisions.

Judges' Comments: "Communicating character to the youth of a community is very important. Teaching character in a way that would be fun will leave a longer effect."

Contact: Chief Stephen Schmidt
Commander Lynn Atkinson
901 Wellington Avenue
Elk Grove Village, Illinois 60007
847/357-4100

Mundelein

Holiday Help Program

Holiday Help Program, with the aid of 500 volunteers, was developed to assist local citizens with economic hardships during the holiday season. The program is comprised of 7 tiers of events that go on between Thanksgiving and Christmas. Each event focuses on meeting different needs. None of the programs would have been successful without the community's generous donations.

Contact: Raymond Rose, Chief of Police
221 North Lake Street
Mundelein, Illinois 60060
847/968-4600

Quincy

Baldwin Health Fair

Baldwin Health Fair, focused on sharing good health habits, is targeted to fifth graders in Adams County. With the help of over 100 volunteers and support from organizations in the health, education, and social services sector, the event proves to be a fun, hands-on experience for the fifth graders. The children leave having learned about physical, emotional and environmental health and safety.

Contact: Barbara Taylor
John Wood Community College
1301 South 48th
Quincy, Illinois 62305
217/641-4904

Sterling and Rock Falls

Let's Feed Our Children

Let's Feed Our Children, nominated for the 2003 Governor's Cup award was developed in direct response to the drastic increase in demand on local food pantries in Whiteside County. As the end of the school year approached, two citizens were gravely concerned that children would go without a meal during the summer. With the help of local churches, businesses and social service organizations, Let's Feed Our Children was able to feed, on average, 425 children in Summer 2002.

Judges' Comments: "Brought two communities together during a trying time...Great example of what can be done when a special need arises."

Contact: Russ Siefken
502 First Avenue
P.O. Box 806
Sterling, Illinois 61081

or

Kate Vos
412 First Avenue
Sterling, Illinois 61081
815/625-0333

St. Charles Township

St. Charles High Schools Drill Team Kick-a-Thon 2002

St. Charles High Schools Drill Team Kick-a-Thon 2002 brought 679 volunteers together to raise money to "kick" cancer. This local fundraiser draws everyone in the community, as the money raised goes to the Kane County Chapter of the American Cancer Society. Residents, businesses and government join together to form a community kick-line and earn money towards cancer research.

Contact: Ginny Waller
39 West 384 Kurt Court
St. Charles, Illinois 60175
630/584-5277

Westmont

Westmont Citizens Police Academy Alumni Nursing Home Bingo

Several Westmont Citizens Police Academy Alumni (WCPAA) members knew residents of the Westmont Convalescent Center (WCC), a local nursing home. When WCC staff asked WCPAA members to volunteer at WCC and interact with residents via Bingo, WCPAA members answered the call. The time these two groups shared together blossomed into friendships, which gave many residents a renewed sense of pride and self-esteem, and brought joy to the WCPAA members.

Contact: Randy Sticha, Chief
Westmont Police Department
500 North Cass Avenue
Westmont, Illinois 60559
630/968-2151

or

Dawn King
WCPAA Program Coordinator
37 Cumnor
Westmont, Illinois 60559
630/241-3278

Westmont

Westmont Fire Department Citizens Volunteer Programs

Westmont Fire Department created three volunteer programs to assist them in improving services to the public, where seniors comprise two-fifths of the population. These programs—Citizens Fire Academy and Alumni Association, Emergency Management Agency and Citizens Clerical Volunteer Program—helped the fire department improve its service to the public.

Contact: David Weiss
Deputy Fire Chief
6015 South Cass Avenue
Westmont, Illinois 60559
630/829-4483

2003 Governor's Home Town Awards

Category VII

(Communities with a population of 48,001-100,000)

Cicero

Cicero Youth Commission

The Cicero Youth Commission was formed to offset the influx of gangs in the area and to serve as an alternative to youth crimes. With a volunteer corps of 75 individuals, the organization is able to provide various programs to youths aged 9 to 16. Youth crimes have fallen 29% since the inception of Cicero's Youth Commission. The organization plans on continuing to expand the types of programs it offers.

Judges' Comments: "The Cicero Youth Commission offers 64 family oriented programs that have resulted in a reduction in crime and gang activity. Such programs, more than anything else, offer hope and encouragement to those who need it most."

Contact: Rocco Dawge
3513 South 58th Avenue
Cicero, Illinois 60804
708/601-8551

Des Plaines

Des Plaines Healthy Community Project

Des Plaines Healthy Community Project is comprised of 4 different taskforces: Neighbors Helping Neighbors, Healthy Communities/Healthy Youth, Intergenerational and Seasons of Service. The project was developed to promote a closer working relationship between service organizations, businesses, individuals, schools and religious groups. Several of the projects bring youth and seniors together in creative ways to allow the two groups to interact and learn from each other. Each group has

found the experience invaluable.

Contact: Arlene Merriman
1420 Miner Street, Room 503
Des Plaines, Illinois 60016
847/391-5480

Des Plaines

Meals on Wheels Program

The number of Seniors the Des Plaines Meals on Wheels program serves on a weekly basis frequently changes. Despite the randomness, this program has existed for 25 years and will continue to do so thanks to the aid of its 81 volunteers. Meals on Wheels is a vital program for seniors who are homebound and unable to create their own meals. It also provides human interaction for the seniors. The volunteers, including local students, have benefited as well.

Contact: Kathy Puetz, MSW
1420 Miner Street, Room 503
Des Plaines, Illinois 60016
847/391-5480

Downers Grove

Downers Grove Bone Marrow Drive

One local resident's grandson was in desperate need of a bone marrow transplant. After no one in the immediate family or in the National Registry met the grandson's blood type, the grandfather took to his streets to ask for help in saving his grandson. This action sparked a blood marrow drive in Downers Grove and resulted in raising \$22,500 to fund blood marrow testing. This could not have been done without the aid of 789 volunteers from throughout the community. People came together to donate money, blood, resources and time. Al-

though the grandson passed away, the child left a lasting mark on this community.

Contact: Cathy Schuster
801 Burlington Avenue
Downers Grove, Illinois 60515
630/434-5929

Hoffman Estates

Bridging Community Diversity

Hoffman Estates decided it wanted to bridge the gap between the various cultures present in its community without losing the unique qualities of those particular cultures. To do this, they developed a Cultural Awareness Commission. In 2002, this commission hosted a quilt show, "A Celebration of African-American Quilts", that presented the importance of quilting on the efforts of the Underground Railroad. Through the help of 92 volunteers, the show was a success in teaching tolerance through understanding. The Cultural Awareness Commission is currently in the process of organizing its next quilt show in which a different culture will be showcased.

Judges' Comments: "Hoffman Estates recognized the fact that immigration constituted a major and desired constituency in their community. In embracing this diversity, the village developed a 'cultural awareness commission' and some dynamite programs."

Contact: Michelle Pilafis
1900 West Hassell Road
Hoffman Estates, Illinois 60195
847/882-9100

Quincy

Premier Community Service Website

Realizing there was a serious need for a clearinghouse of information, especially for community services, the Premier Community Service Website was created. Quincy.net, nominated for the 2003 Governor's Cup award, is an innovative way to share the valuable community services resources available while simultaneously promoting local businesses and new

business opportunities. Over 200 volunteers assist in the research and maintenance required to keep the information on this website accurate and up-to-date.

Judges' Comments: "Quincy.net created employment for 27 and retained 14 more jobs, all while creating a web presence for a community ready and in need of economic development."

Contact: Kyle Trudell, President
325 South 8th Street, Suite I
Quincy, Illinois 62301
217/224-7411

Rich Township

Rich Township Pantry

The Rich Township Pantry developed as a result of a number of modest to low income families living in Rich Township. Gaining support from churches, businesses, non-profit community clubs, schools and the community, the pantry and its 350 dedicated volunteers are able to provide 2,100 individuals with needed nutritional foods.

Contact: Vicki Sline/Joanne McClelland
Rich Township
22013 Governors Highway
Richton Park, Illinois 60471
708/748-6722

Whiteside County

The Clothes Closet

The Clothes Closet, a not-for-profit organization, receives funding only from the community and local businesses so it may offer household goods and clothing free to anyone in need. An estimated 300 committed volunteers assist in collecting, cleaning, hanging and delivering the donated items. For a community badly hit by a number of economic hardships, The Clothes Closet meets an essential need while simultaneously providing its recipients self confidence.

Contact: Don George
1800 Prophetstown Road
Rock Falls, Illinois 61071
815/625-4554

2003 Governor's Home Town Awards

Category VIII

(Communities with a population of over 100,000)

Aurora Township

Annual Christmas Dinner for Seniors

Residents, local businesses and a not-for-profit organization gather together each year to organize an annual Christmas dinner for its seniors who would otherwise be lonely during this holiday. With the help of 40 dependable volunteers, 400 seniors were able to enjoy a traditional Christmas meal in 2002. The volunteers joined together to prepare the meal, wrap presents, give a ride to seniors who lacked transportation and deliver food to those seniors who could not leave their homes. Without these volunteers' dedication, the dinner would not have been a success.

Contact: James Murphy
Township Supervisor
Aurora Township
80 North Broadway
Aurora, Illinois 60505
630/897-8777

Champaign County

Pen Pal Program

The Pen Pal Program allows young students and senior citizens to interact. This interaction often helps break down preconceived notions each has about the other generation, fosters a friendship between the two groups and educates the children about writing letters. A total of 589 volunteers are involved (278 seniors and 311 children). The costs are minimal and are picked up by students at a local university. Thus, this project involves members of every generation within the community.

Contact: Vicki Stewart/Patricia Wenzel
48 Main
Champaign, Illinois 61820
217/359-6500

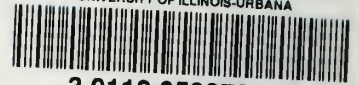
Joliet

Girl Scouts of Trailways Council Brownie Troop #146 New and Used Children's Book Drive

Joliet's Brownie Troop #146, this year's nominee for the 2003 Governor's Cup award, took on a challenging project. Just learning to read themselves, the troop was upset that some kids did not own books or have access to books. The girls decided to hold a book drive, collecting and delivering books to 3 local agencies that worked with children. With troop leaders' assistance, the word spread about the book drive. The community responded by donating 1,981 books, more than the troop had anticipated. Books continue coming in and the girls pass them along to the three agencies.

Judges' were extremely impressed that this project was ENTIRELY created and implemented by a group of first graders with very minimal help from adults. The girls "established goals, identified needs, created a solution, planned, implemented and promoted the project, measured the results (which greatly exceeded the goals) and identified the follow-up service opportunities."

Contact: Cynthia Koulis
1303 Cora Street
Joliet, Illinois 60435
815/722-3706



2003

GOVERNOR'S HOME TOWN AWARDS PROGRAM

In a time of reduced public resources, volunteers have organized in many communities to contribute to their town's economic progress and quality of life. By taking the initiative on a project, volunteers are completing projects that otherwise would not be accomplished. The Governor's Home Town Awards Program recognizes the outstanding successes that volunteers have made in their communities in addressing local needs.

Administered by the
ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY*

*d.b.a. Department of Commerce and Community Affairs

Jack Lavin, Director

